Curriculum goals: to outline the ways that modern civilization is *not* civilized, in the sense that it used to be; and how that could change.

Structure: the intended format for the curriculum is weekly small group discussions over two months. Each week, all participants should read the four main readings in detail (and can optionally read any of the supplemental readings). I recommend that group discussions are scheduled for 1.5 hours each week; and also that, at the end of each session, four people volunteer to each lead the discussion of one of the following week's readings.

An alternative approach is to host longer sessions and have participants read then discuss each of the readings in turn in the session itself. If you do so, I recommend scheduling 2-hour sessions and skipping the fourth reading each week. However, everyone should feel free to approach the curriculum however they find most useful (and please report back on what works and what doesn't).

Week 0: Politics, emotions, language

The main goal for this week is for participants to get to know each other and sync up on the rest of the curriculum. I recommend spending around half the time talking about where each person is coming from and what they want to get out of the curriculum.

The first two readings are focused on meta-level tools and norms for making controversial discussions more productive. The next two readings dig into some psychological phenomena, with the goal of helping you notice when you're slipping into that mindset.

1. Book review: The Scout Mindset (Alexander)
2. Taboo your words (Yudkowsky)
3. The Inner Ring (Lewis)
4. What you can't say (Graham)

Supplemental readings:

5. Politics and the English Language (George Orwell)
6. The engineer and the diplomat (Hoffman)
7. Social justice and words, words, words (Scott Alexander)
8. Semantic stopsigns (Yudkowsky)
9. Toxoplasma of rage (Alexander)
10. Hanson on sacred values / taboo tradeoffs

Week 1: Civilizational Decay

This week's readings lay out the hypothesis that many key aspects of Western civilization have decayed.

1. Murder as a measuring stick (Arctotherium)

2. There is no liberal West (Lyons)
3. Complex systems won't survive the competence crisis (Robertson)
4. South Africa's racketeer state (Thomas)

Supplemental readings:

5. The end of industrial society (Samo Burja)
6. The Comprachicos (Rand)
7. The full story of the FAA's hiring scandal (Woodgrains)
8. The DDOS attack of academic bullshit (Landau-Taylor)
9. My IRB Nightmare (Scott Alexander)
10. Something on Live players (Burja)

Week 2: The Ideological Underpinnings of Leftism

This week's readings lay out the hypothesis that, since World War 2, westerners have lived in an ideological landscape shaped by taboos on how nationalism and race are discussed.

1. American Strong Gods (N. S. Lyons)
2. Book Review: The Origins of Woke (Scott Alexander)
3. Why we need to talk about the right's stupidity problem (Cofnas) (**second half**, starting from *Why Everything Goes Woke*)
4. How the luxury beliefs of an educated elite erode society (Henderson)

Supplemental readings:

5. The Ultracalvinist Hypothesis (Yarvin)
6. National IQs are valid (Cremieux)
7. A Guide for the Hereditarian Revolution (Cofnas)
8. Exiting the vampire castle
9. Harrison Bergeron (Vonnegut)

Week 3: The Rise of the Managerial State

This week's readings lay out the hypothesis that the character of western governments has transformed over the last century (especially since WW2) towards ever-growing bureaucracies.

1. Milestones in the development of the administrative state (Dudley) or The rise and rise of the administrative state (Lawson)
2. FDR, Attlee, WTF happened in 1971
3. Quotes from Moral Mazes (Moskowitz)
4. A guide to understanding the hoax of the century: thirteen ways of looking at disinformation (Siegel)

Supplemental readings:

5. How the administrative state got to this challenging place

6. A study of the industrial party and the sentimental party
7. The fourth form of government (Landau-Taylor)

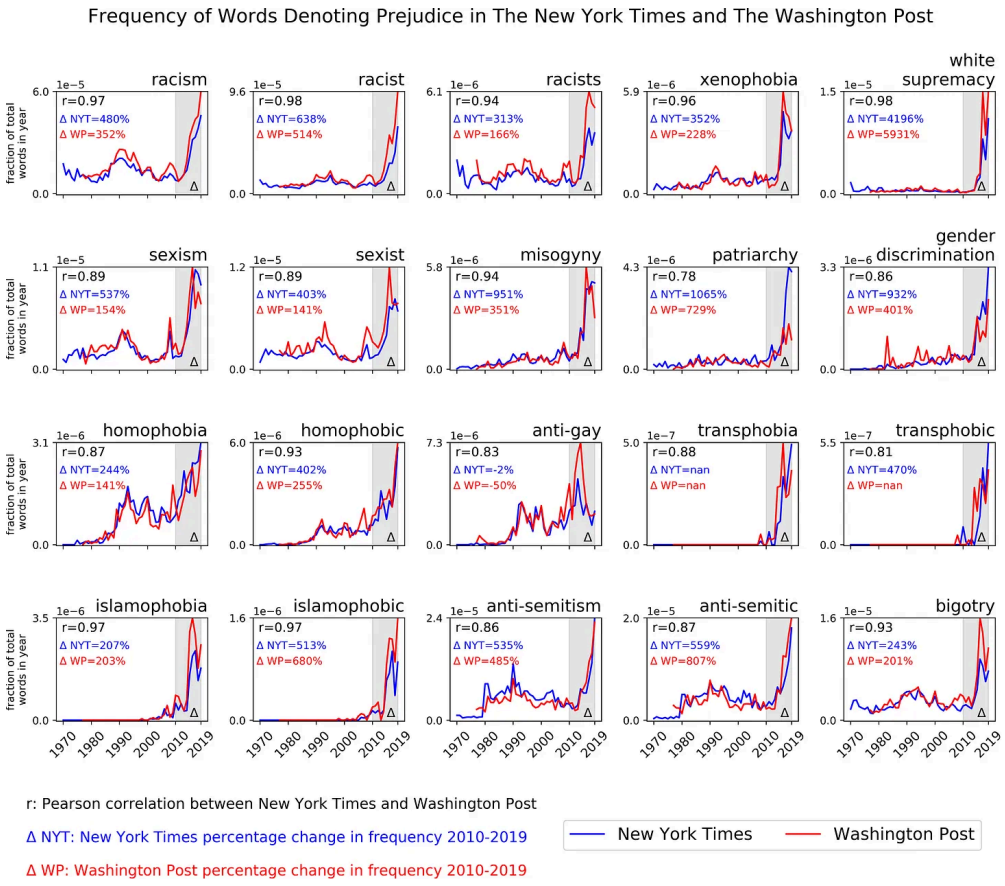
Week 4: Top and Bottom against Middle

This weeks' readings explore how managerial elites leverage client classes to bolster their own positions, at the expense of the majority (which, when taken to an extreme, is known as anarcho-tyranny).

8. The unprotected class (Carl)
9. How the grooming gangs scandal was covered up (Ashworth-Hayes)
10. Westminster must fall (Cummings)
11. Biological Leninism (Spandrell)

Supplemental readings:

1. World on fire extract
2. How the bobos broke America (Brooks)
3. The tyranny of structurelessness
4. The crisis of authority
5. The education of a libertarian (Peter Thiel)
6. The Straussian Moment (Peter Thiel)
7. The Doomsday Machine excerpts (Ellsberg)
8. Prevalence of prejudice-denoting words in news media discourse (Rozado)



Week 5: Demography and nations

This week's readings explore the concept of national identity, and how it relates to immigration.

1. We wanted workers, instead we got people (Elbel)
2. After the Republic [and maybe something about 80-year cycles?]
3. America is a Nation (Vance)
4. The Baby Boom (Arctotherium)
5. Something on how China is also struggling with fertility? (The race to stay standing)

Supplemental readings:

6. Increasing skilled immigration is a mistake (Arctotherium)
7. Review: the culture transplant
8. Albion's seed review (Alexander)
9. National Libertarians and National Protectionists (Ramaswamy)
10. On being conservative
11. The bull market in politics - Thiel
12. The Succession Problem
13. A new golden age of governance (Wolf Tivy)
14. Cognitive capital, governance, and the wealth of nations

12. The use of knowledge in society (Hayek)
13. Are we getting dumber? (Jensen)
14. Something about the swiss system
15. Seeing like a state excerpts

Week 6: The global (political) economy

1. Something on the (global) social economy
2. A techno-industrialist manifesto (Slodov)
3. Something on the future of war
4. Something on the money printer / crypto

Supplemental readings:

Week 7: Group psychology of politics

1. Power lies trembling (Ngo)
2. Local validity as a key to sanity and civilization (Yudkowsky)
3. Something on virtue ethics
4. Elite coordination via the consensus of power (Ngo)

Supplemental readings:

5. Excerpts from a larger discussion about simulacra (Hoffman)
6. Guilt, shame and depravity (Hoffman)
7. On commitments to anti-normativity (Taylor)
8. The Debtor's Revolt (Ben Hoffman) – excerpt
9. No, the USA is not headed towards a civil war
10. Cocytarchy by Kulak
11. Preference falsification and egregores
12. Something from Cummings about political strategy

Week 8: AGI

This is not a curriculum about AGI; instead it's focused on helping people see the world as it is more clearly. However, a major reason to do so is to be able to think better about AGI and its effects on the world.

1. AGI, governments, and free societies (Bullock, Hammond, and Krier)
2. A piece on social media as "first contact" with AI (Harris)
3. Cortés, Pizarro, and Afonso as Precedents for Takeover (Kokotajlo)
4. Meditations on Machinic Desire (Vendrov)

Supplemental readings:

5. Political power and technological truth (Balaji)

6. Meltdown (Nick Land)
7. A conservative perspective on AGI
8. Secrets (Ellsberg), pages 32-43
9. Our genetic constitution (Tim Latin)
10. Something on drone warfare?